

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 0945Z 081252Z

47

ACTION MCT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 L-03 SSO-00 INRE-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DOTE-00 EB-07

FAA-00 IO-13 SY-05 /089 W
----- 023870

O R 081213Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6646

INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

AMCONSUL NICE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 9452

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS

SUBJECT: TERRORISTS STRANDED IN GREECE

REF: STATE 221434 (NOTAL)

1. THE TWO HIGHJACKERS OF THE ABORTIVE SEPTEMBER 4-5 KLM SKYJACKING WERE RETURNED TO CYPRUS (LARNACA) ON THE NIGHT OF SEPTEMBER 6, BEFORE WE RECEIVED REFTEL. THEREFORE, WE HAVE NOT ASKED THE GOG, AS INSTRUCTED BY REFTEL, WHETHER IT INTENDS TO HONOR ITS RESPONSIBILITY UNDER THE 1970 HAGUE CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF UNLAWFUL SEIZURE OF AIRCRAFT.

2. HOWEVER, THE EMBASSY DID INQUIRE OF THE CHIEF OF SECURITY, GREEK CAA, AND THE DIRECTOR OF ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT WHAT THE FACTS WERE REGARDING THE TWO HIGHJACKERS WHO CAME TO ATHENS AND THEIR RETURN TO CYPRUS. THEY PROVIDED US WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: (A) THE AGREEMENT
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 0945Z 081252Z

REACHED BY THE GOC WITH THE HIGHJACKERS IN CYPRUS, IN

RETURN FOR THE RELEASE OF THE PASSENGERS, PROVIDED THAT THE HIGHJACKERS WOULD BE FLOWN TO A DESTINATION OF THEIR CHOICE. (B) THE GOC SENT TWO OF THE THREE HIGHJACKERS, THOSE NAMED IN REFTEL, TO ATHENS BY REGULAR CYPRUS AIRWAYS FLIGHT (ARRIVING HERE AROUND 6:15P.M. SEPTEMBER 6), AND WITHOUT ANY CYPRIOT SECURITY ESCORT, TO CONNECT WITH A SAS FLIGHT TO BAGHDAD. HOWEVER, THE SAS PILOT REFUSED TO TAKE THEM ON THE GROUNDS THERE WERE NO SECURITY ESCORTS AND THE GOG REFUSED TO PROVIDE ANY. (C) SINCE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE TWO HIGHJACKERS TO PROCEED TO BAGHDAD THEY WERE RETURNED TO CYPRUS ON A SPECIAL CYPRUS AIRWAYS FLIGHT. (D) THE CHIEF OF CAA SECURITY DESCRIBED THE GOG INVOLVEMENT IN THIS INCIDENT AS "PASSIVE" AND SAID THE GOG TOOK NO ACTION BUT ONLY KEPT THE HIGHJACKERS AT ATHENS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IN "TRANSIT" STATUS UNDER GUARD. HE ALSO MADE THE POINT THAT THE HIGHJACKING TOOK PLACE IN ANOTHER COUNTRY AND THAT THE GOG HAD NO INFORMATION FROM INTERPOL OR ANYONE ELSE CONCERNING THE HIGHJACKERS AND THEREFORE THEY WERE TREATED AS "TRANSIT PASSENGERS" (SIC).

3. THE GREEK AIRPORT DIRECTOR VOLUNTEERED TO US THAT THE GREEK AUTHORITIES DID NOT CONSIDER ARRESTING THE TWO HIGHJACKERS. (OBVIOUSLY THEY DID NOT WISH TO BECOME DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THIS AFFAIR AND PREFERRED TO LEAVE IT IN THE HANDS OF THE GOC).
KUBISCH

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